

General Plan Annual Progress Report

2012

County of Inyo



Prepared by Inyo County Planning Department

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I. Introduction

This report has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of Government Code Section 65400. Guidance for preparation of the report is provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR)¹.

The purpose of the document is to report on Inyo County's progress in implementing its General Plan. The document has been provided to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for their review and submitted to OPR and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Background

The County adopted a comprehensive update to the General Plan on December 11, 2001, and has amended the Plan on certain occasions since. The planning process for the update took over four years, many public hearings and meetings, and substantial effort on the part of staff, the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, local organizations and interest groups, and the general public.

The Plan replaced, reformatted, and/or updated a number of older General Plan Elements and other planning documents that had been adopted over the years. In addition to the many working documents, staff reports, and outreach materials, the Plan resulted in the following major documents that are utilized on a day-to-basis in the County's planning processes:

- General Plan Summary
- Background Report
- Goals and Policies Report
- Land Use and Circulation Diagrams
- Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

The Inyo County General Plan received awards of excellence from local chapters of the American Planning Association in 2001. The policy document and diagrams are available on the Planning Department's website at the following link: http://inyo.planning.org/general_plan/index.htm.

Informational Document

This document is a reporting document, and does not create or alter policy. The content is provided for informational purposes only, and is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Guidelines Section 15306.

¹ General Plan Annual Progress Report Guidance. State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit. Revised July 11, 2007. Refer to http://opr.ca.gov/docs/GP_APR_Guidance_2007.pdf

Organization

After this Introduction, a summary of projects and issues addressed in the last year is provided, and then each General Plan element is addressed. Following these topics, the County's planned General Plan and Zoning Ordinance update are addressed. Appendix A includes Government Code Section 65400. Appendix B includes the HCD reporting forms.

II. Plans, Projects, and Accomplishments

During 2012 the County processed numerous projects and participated in a variety of planning programs. The following summaries provide a brief overview of these projects and programs, and are not intended to be exhaustive.

Building Permits

Seventy building permits were reviewed by the Planning Department for zoning and General Plan consistency issues. Building permits were issued for seven new single-family homes, four of which were new mobilehomes, and demolition permits were issued for one mobilehome. The resulting building permit activity indicates a net increase of six single-family dwelling units during 2012. Certificates of occupancy were issued for three residences and one miscellaneous structure throughout the County, for a total of four. There were also seven solar energy generating systems installed during 2012, both ground-mounted systems and roof-mounted systems. Additionally, there were a couple of pre-fabricated buildings installed along the Digital 395 corridor intended to protect switching and connecting equipment for the Digital 395 network.

Planning Permits

The Planning Department processed a variety of planning permits during 2012, including variances, conditional use permits (CUP), subdivisions, and associated environmental reviews. The breakdown in applications received is as follows:

- 3 Lot Line Adjustments (LLA)
- 4 Tentative Parcel Maps (TPM)
- 1 Tentative Tract Map (TTM)
- 4 CUPs
- 1 Variance
- 4 Reclamation Plans
- 5 General Plan Amendments (GPA)
- 6 Zoning Reclassifications (ZR)
- 2 Lone Pine Design Reviews
- 1 Development Agreement
- 1 Reversion to Acreage

In addition, 5 zoning violations were logged and 3 Planning Commission Appeals were received.

During the past year, the Planning Commission agendas included the following application types:

- 4 CUPs
- 1 TPM
- 1 GPA
- 2 ZRs
- 1 TTM
- 1 Variance
- 1 Reclamation Plan
- 1 Reversion to Acreage
- 1 Revocation of a CUP
- 1 Time Extension of a CUP

Of the projects reviewed by the Planning Commission, four applications were presented to the Board of Supervisors. In addition, the Lone Pine Architectural Design Review Board heard two design review cases. No emergency ordinances or moratoria were approved in 2012.

Projects Reviewed by the Planning Commission during 2012

The following applications were reviewed by the Planning Commission and/or Board of Supervisors during the past year:

Conditional Use Permit #2008-02 & #2011-03/Deep Rose LLC Geothermal Exploratory Well Drilling Project The Planning Commission approved both CUPS with the Finding's and Conditions of Approval. The project consisted of one CUP for geothermal exploration activities and the other CUP for water transfer activities which were needed for well drilling and dust suppression.

Ordinance Extending Certain Provisions of Inyo County Code Section 18.78.285 The Planning Commission recommended to the Board of Supervisors adopting this ordinance to allow additional time for nonconforming dwellings affected by the Big Pine fire to be reconstructed.

Conditional Use Permit #2012-01/Xanterra The Planning Commission approved a CUP subject to the conditions of approval for a covered deck/entryway to encroach into the required 25-foot front yard setback for the site. The site is located at the Furnace Creek Ranch Resort within the Death Valley National Park.

Zone Reclassification #2012/02/LADWP & General Plan Amendment #2012-02/LADWP The Planning Commission recommended approval to the Board of

Supervisors for a Zone Reclassification and General Plan Amendment for a 1.62 acre site owned by LADWP and used for storage of construction equipment, recreational vehicles, and heavy equipment. The proposal requested a landuse designation change from Public Facility (PF) to General Industrial (GI) and a zone change from Public (P) to General Industrial (M-1).

Reclamation Plan #2011-01/ CR Briggs Corporation The Planning Commission approved a Reclamation Plan to expand the existing Briggs footprint by 94 acres increasing the mine life an additional five to seven years. The site is located in Panamint Valley, approximately six miles from Ballarat, on Wingate Road, within Inyo County and BLM land.

Variance #2012-01/Van Nest The Planning Commission approved a variance granting a reduction in the required sideyard setbacks from twenty feet to five feet for a parcel zoned Rural Residential (RR). The variance was necessary because the lot was nonconforming with regards to width. The minimum lot width for the RR zone is 125 feet whereas this parcel was only 94 feet wide.

Tentative Parcel Map 402/Roseme The Planning Commission approved a subdivision of a 1.75-acre parcel, located at 710 South Barlow Lane. The subdivision created three lots with one containing an existing home. The project site is designated as Residential Very Low (RVL) and zoned One-Family Residences (R-1), 0.5-acre minimum lots size.

Zone Reclassification #2012-05/Home Occupations The Planning Commission recommended approval by the Board of Supervisors for an amendment to the Zoning Code to allow for Home Occupations as an accessory use in all residential districts. This made the zoning code compliant with the California Home Food Act (AB 1616) and the County's General Plan.

General Plan Amendment #2010-01, Zone Reclassification #2010-02, Conditional Use Permit #2010-03, and Reversion to Acreage #2012-01/ Crystal Geyser Roxane Cabin Bar Ranch Water Bottling Plant Project The Planning Commission recommended to the Board of Supervisors approval of the project. The applicant is proposing building and operating a spring water bottling facility on a 34-acre site adjacent to the southern border of the community of Cartago and on the east side of Highway 395. The project will pump 360 acre feet of groundwater per year. The project is asking for a General Plan Amendment to change the landuse designation from Rural Protection (RP) and Residential Rural High (RRH) to Light Industrial (LI), a Zone Reclassification to change the zoning from Open Space (OS) and Rural Residential (RR) to Light Industrial (M2), a Conditional Use Permit to allow for a bottling plant, and a Reversion to Acreage to extinguish lot lines and roads from a previously, but never constructed, residential subdivision of the property.

Other Projects

The following discussion summarizes other current projects regarding which the County expended substantial efforts.

Zoning Code/General Plan update – The County adopted a comprehensive General Plan update in 2001. One of the follow-up actions directed in the 2001 General Plan was to update the Zoning Code, which is a component of the Inyo County Code. Staff worked with Willdan in 2011 to prepare updated Zoning Code sections and incorporated their input into a comprehensive Zoning Code update and prepared a related General Plan update. These draft updates were provided for review by the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission in a series of workshops in 2012, culminating in a joint workshop with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on July 10. Additional work was directed regarding code enforcement and special event permits, and the Planning Commission provided input regarding these issues at workshops later in the year. The next steps are to incorporate comments from the workshops into the Zoning Code and General Plan update and begin public outreach and the environmental review process.

Hidden Hills Solar Energy Generating Station – proposed by subsidiaries of BrightSource Energy, Inc., this project, in Charleston View, proposes two approximately 750-foot towers surrounded by 85,000 heliostats each and related facilities on private lands just west of the Nevada border and north of Old Spanish Trail, with electricity and natural gas transmission to the site through Nevada. The California Energy Commission (CEC) maintains exclusive permitting jurisdiction under the Warren Alquist Act, and the County has been participating extensively in the CEC's certification process. The Final Staff Assessment completed by the CEC was released in December of 2012 and hearings are scheduled for March of 2013.

Northland Power Independence Solar Generating Plant – proposed project is for a photovoltaic solar power generating plant on 1,280 acres of property located southeast of Independence, CA off of Mazourka Canyon Road. The project is intended to create at least five permanent jobs over the life of the project and the energy produced will be sold to LADWP as renewable energy.

Yucca Mountain Repository Assessment Office –funding for development of Yucca Mountain waste site was terminated by the Obama Administration consequently eliminating the funding to all Affected Unit of Local Government (AULGs) and terminating the project for Inyo County. During 2012 Planning Staff worked to “mothball” the Yucca Mountain Repository Office. Staff has continued to monitor whether the Obama Administration has any intentions to start-up the Yucca Mountain again.

Early in 2011 Inyo County contracted with Geoscience Consultants LLC to conduct a Rhyolite study in the Greenwater Range in Southeast Inyo County to support some of the County's volcanology contentions. Geoscience completed this work in July, 2012.

Cost, Energy, and Service Efficiencies Action Plan for Southern California Edison (SCE) – Inyo county was selected in 2011 by SCE to prepare a Cost, Energy, and Service Efficiencies Action Plan. Planning staff worked with a consultant and conducted various public outreach programs and a final plan was released in November, 2012. This plan outlines ways that the County can reduce their energy use, identifies goals and milestones for energy reduction, serves as an educational tool for other groups, identifies the highest and lowest energy users within the County, offers strategies that the County can use in achieving their energy reduction goals, and provides a template that other organizations can use to develop their own Action Plan.

Mining – pursuant to the Surface Mining and Land Reclamation Act (SMARA), the County continued its oversight activities to encourage production and conservation of minerals and minimize associated environmental impacts. Staff inspected approximately 100 mines and processed a reclamation plan for C.R. Briggs.

Digital 395 – the County worked with Praxis Associates, a fiber-optic network development firm, to develop and design the proposed regional network, which, upon completion, will attain broadband speeds of up to 40 Gigabits per second. During 2012 Praxis began installing the fiber optic line in the north and the south ends of the network. Praxis began installing the fiber optic line in Inyo County in the beginning of 2013.

Brownfields Grant – On August 9th, 2011 Inyo County entered into a MOU with Nye, Esmeralda, Lincoln, and White Pine counties of Nevada for the Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant to conduct environmental site assessments and area-wide planning in support of renewable energy, transmission and economic development in the vicinity of identified Brownfields sites. The county has identified two potential sites in the County. One is on the northwest side of the Owens Lake and the second is the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery. Phase 1, environmental site assessments have been completed for both and phase 2, site investigations are currently being conducted.

Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) – Planning Staff continued to work with the advisory committee on various natural resources projects within the county. NRAC provided input on various natural resource based projects that the County participated in during 2012 including an OHV grant, AAPL's Adventure Trails pilot program, SCE's Energy Efficiency Program, and the Forest Plan Update.

Olancho-Cartago Four-Lane Project – Caltrans released a draft environmental document for this project in 2010, which proposes to expand Highway 395 from just south of Olancho to north of Cartago. The Inyo County Local Transportation Commission held a meeting in Olancho to further gather public input on the environmental document. The County provided input into a preferred alternative for the project, which has not been chosen or definitively defined. County and Local Transportation Commission staff have provided continuing input regarding access and circulation issues.

Independence Town Rehabilitation Project – This project will reconstruct 2.2 miles of streets within the community of Independence. The environmental phase for this project was completed in 2011 and the project moved into the design phase in 2012.

South Bishop Resurfacing Project – This project will reconstruct Sunland Drive from US 395 to West Line Street and also Sunland Reservation Road. The County initiated the environmental phase for this project in 2011. The project has been federalized so the project will involve both CEQA and NEPA review. The County is working toward completion of the environmental document. This project is being combined with the Sunland Bicycle Lanes Transportation Enhancement project.

Dehy Park Improvement Project – This is the second phase of a project to construct a pathway, bridge, and to construct a visitor's center. The NEPA review of this project was completed in 2012. The project is being revised as a portion of the project (visitor's center) is no longer eligible for federal funds as a result of the federal transportation reauthorization – MAP-21.

Ed Power Bicycle Lanes – This project will widen Ed Powers Road and install 4' wide bicycle lanes. The County initiated the environmental component for this project that was programmed in the 2012 STIP using federal Transportation Enhancement funds. This project proposes to place bicycle lanes on both sides of Ed Power Road.

Sunland Bicycle Lanes – This project will construct Class II or III bicycle lanes on Sunland Drive. The project has been combined with the South Bishop Resurfacing Project. The County is working with the state to complete the CEQA and NEPA review for this project.

Ninemile Canyon Guardrail Project – This project involved the construction of approximately one mile of guardrail on a steep narrow mountain road using Highway Safety Improvement Program funds. The construction component for this project was completed in August 2012.

Lake Sabrina Bridge Replacement Project – This project will replace an unsafe bridge across Bishop Creek. Construction began in the late summer and is now in winter suspension. The project will be completed in summer 2013.

Lower Owens River Project (LORP) - The goals of the LORP, to establish a healthy, functioning ecosystem for the benefit of biodiversity and Threatened and Endangered species, are largely being met. The initial ecological effect of supplying water to the river were dramatic, especially the recruitment of riparian vegetation and the return of wildlife.

2012 was the fifth year of monitoring of the LORP and included hydrologic monitoring of seasonal habitat flow including flood extent, rapid assessment survey, land (range) management, and saltcedar and weed control.

Tules, which include bulrushes and cattails, continue to increase in acreage and dominate much of the open water in the Lower Owens River. Tules on the river present more of a management challenge. Mechanical removal is expensive, and only provides short-term benefit. Burning tules on the river would set back the development of the riparian ecosystem, and encourage weeds. It may be possible to vary the flow of the water in such a way that tules can be periodically drowned. The County and LADWP continue to evaluate control methods for Tules.

More detailed information about the condition of the LORP can be found in the LORP Annual Report, which is available on the Water Department's website at www.inyowater.org/LORP.

LORP Recreational Use Plan – the LORP area is appealing to recreationists who enjoy bird watching, wildlife viewing, hunting and fishing, and many other outdoor activities in a natural setting. With increased use there is concern about the development of unauthorized roads, and problems including waste dumping, vandalism, illegal fires, artifact gathering, and vegetation clearing. Managing these problems can be costly for LADWP and the County, and interfere with achieving LORP goals. In order to head off management problems, the County began development of a Recreation Use Plan in 2010.

A draft LORP Recreational Use Plan was released in January 2013. The plan was designed to balance the need to protect the recovering ecosystem, respect traditional values and uses, provide attractive recreational opportunities, not interfere with LADWP's operations, and to be consistent with LORP goals. The draft is the product of broad research, agency consultations, and extensive public outreach including workshops and presentations, stakeholder interviews and surveys. The plan identifies key goals of the recreation plan as strengthening the tourist economy of local communities, enhancing user opportunities, improving access and wayfinding, improving access for fishing, canoeing, and kayaking, and inspiring cultural and environmental education.

The draft plan is available on the Inyo County Water Department website www.inyowater.org in the LORP section or at www.lowerowensriver.org.

LORP Post-Implementation Agreement – in 2010, the County and LADWP finalized a joint funding agreement, which describes project cost, assigns roles, defines fiscal responsibilities, and explains procedures for shared funding of the LORP through July 11, 2022. The County shares many of the costs associated with LORP implementation, including biologic and hydrologic monitoring, operations and maintenance, and fees for the LORP consultant, E.S.I. Inc. The County's share of the costs associated with the LORP can be obtained by contacting the Inyo County Water Department, at 760-878-0001.

Additional Mitigation Projects Developed by the Ad Hoc Group – the 1991 EIR (Water from the Owens Valley to Supply the second Los Angeles Aqueduct), and the 1997 MOU, identify several commitments to provide water for mitigation projects in addition to the LORP. Among these commitments is the development of a habitat improvement

plan for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and projects using 1,600 acre-feet of water each year to mitigate for environment impacts due to a loss of area springs. A portion of the 1,600 acre-feet per year will go to on-site mitigation at Hines Spring, with the remaining water going to other projects.

Freeman Creek – this project involves the diversion of Freeman Creek below Keough's Hot Springs into ancestral washes, to create an ecologically diverse riparian corridor and enhanced meadowland. The project was completed in 2011 and appears to be fulfilling goals.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo habitat at Baker and Hogback Creeks – the project plans for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo Habitat Enhancement Project at Baker and Hogback Creeks were finalized in May 2009. LADWP performed CEQA analysis and issued a Mitigated Negative Declaration on the project in late 2009. Fencing has been constructed to exclude cattle from the area during the time when birds are expected to be nesting.

In March 2011, a wildfire fanned by extreme winds swept through much of the project area and destroyed the majority of the mature trees in the project area. These trees had provided the best Cuckoo habitat in the area. After the fire, LADWP continued to plant according to existing plans. ICWD has asked that future planting be responsive to the possibly new needs of the project area. Surveys of the burn area were conducted in 2012.

Hines Spring Aberdeen Ditch – the project infrastructure was completed in 2011. When water was first discharged, the flow found fractures and vanished in the underlying basalt. The pipe was extended in 2012 to discharge further from the fracture.

Hines Springs Well 355 – the project involves running water from Well 355 through a pipeline into a portion of the historic Hines Spring vent channel. The project is designed to create and enhance riparian, aquatic and spring habitat types. In addition, sub-irrigation of pasture/meadow is expected to enhance livestock grazing opportunities. A fish barrier was installed to separate the ditch water and spring water areas so that spring dependent species can be isolated. In 2012, water was released and a ten-acre enclosure built around the extent of the water.

North of Mazourka Canyon Road – this project involves improving an artesian well and drilling another, to supply water to an outflow channel, where it follows existing natural drainage features before flowing through two ponds that terminate west of the Owens River. This project creates spring and riparian habitat, and provides stock water. This project was completed in 2012.

Homestead Well – this project involves piping water from an existing and newly installed flowing well into to an existing channel which flows into a one acre pond. This project was completed in 2012.

Well 368 – the goal of this project is to create and maintain riparian vegetation, aquatic spring habitat for native fish, as well as to provide stock water. It involves augmenting the flow of artesian well F368, which has supported a native fish population, with a new flowing well. The project was completed in early 2012.

Diaz Lake – this project involves supplying up to 250 acre-feet per year of water from the Los Angeles Aqueduct to a 75-acre lake that is an Inyo County recreation facility. The project will provide a secure water supply for Diaz Lake and reduce the dependence on pumping Well No. 82 by Inyo County to supply the lake. This project reduces pumping by Inyo County in the Bairs-Georges Wellfield. LADWP's lease with Inyo County (Lease # 1494) was amended to reflect the change in water supply commitments.

Warren Lake – this project consists of releasing water from the Big Pine Canal into an existing ditch that will carry water to the Warren Lake playa to enhance waterfowl and shorebird habitat. This project will not receive water every year, but receives the balance of the annual 1600 acre-foot water commitment. A flume and flow meter have been installed.

Big Pine Regreening – This mitigation project was identified in the 1991 EIR. The goal of the project is to mitigate for the impacts of abandoned agriculture and groundwater pumping. The project consists of converting a 30 acre parcel of rabbit brush scrub into an irrigated pasture.

The Inyo County/LADWP Technical Group approved an amended mitigation plan in the spring of 2010. Modifications to the plan included a change in water source to include the Big Pine Canal as the primary source of project water (in addition to the Big Pine Ditch and Mendenhall Ditch). Replacement water, equal to or less than 150 AFY, will be supplied by existing well W375. The Water Department modeled the effects of pumping Well 375 continuously at a rate of 150 acre-feet annually, and projected that water table at these sites would decline less than 0.2 feet. The new project scope allows sprinkler irrigation, or flood irrigation.

In November 2011, LADWP issued an Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS) on the project. The environmental study was challenged in court, with the court finding that the environmental study was valid. Preparations are complete for implementing this project.

Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) – The Inyo County Water Department participates in this collaborative body made up of public, private and not-for-profit entities, including the counties, tribes and community service districts. The group consists of 17 voting members. Designed to promote “big-picture” water planning, the California Department of Water Resources now requires that a Regional Water

Management Group (RWMG) collect, bundle and submit projects to be considered for funding. The Plan does not provide the RWMG any regulatory authority. Its decisions and actions cannot supersede any existing plans or regulations that currently govern water management in the region.

The mission of the Inyo Mono RWMG is to “To research, identify, prioritize, and act on regional water issues, and related social and economic issues, so as to protect and enhance our environment and economy. Working together, we create and implement a regional water management plan that complies with applicable policies and regulations and promotes innovative solutions for our region’s needs.” The group is supported by a staffed Program Office.

A phase I, Inyo-Mono IRWMP was completed in late 2010, and in 2011 the group was granted \$1,075,000 in Proposition 84 Implementation Funding. Of this amount, the Inyo County Department of Public Works was awarded a total of \$393,162, which can be assigned for projects to improve reliability of water delivery in Laws, Independence, and Lone Pine, and to upgrade the sewer system in Aspendell.

A phase II, Inyo-Mono IRWMP was completed in 2012. The phase II plan intends to be a living document that will be updated and modified to reflect the most current needs and priorities. It provides current conditions and a vision for water planning in the future. The Inyo-Mono IRWMP will submit an application in 2013 to the California Department of Water Resources requesting funding for a number of water related projects in the region.

Planning Programs

In addition to the cases described above, the County participates in numerous programs and policy discussions at the local, State, and federal levels. The following list summarizes some of the more active projects from 2012.

Owens Lakebed Master Plan – the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) has initiated a Master Plan for the Owens Lakebed. This effort follows many years of dust mitigation efforts with the State Lands Commission and the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District, and will provide a framework for future of the Lakebed, including potential solar energy development, habitat enhancement, and further dust mitigation. County representatives have been participating in the Plan’s preparation including attending meetings and providing public outreach for the planning efforts. A draft Plan was released in October 2011 and DWP has been continuing to refine the plan for further discussions in 2013.

Renewable Energy Planning – the County participated in and monitored numerous planning initiatives for renewable energy. These include the Southwest Solar Transformation Initiative (SSTI); the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP); California Transmission Planning Group (CTPG); and, DWP’s solar projects on Owens Lake (discussed above) and the Solar Ranch in the lower Owens Valley.

Southwest Solar Transformation Initiative - The Southwest Solar Transformation Initiative (SSTI) is a regional team made up of public and private partners committed to advancing solar power adoption by homeowners and businesses across participating municipalities. SSTI is part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Rooftop Solar Challenge and received funding to help "streamline and standardize permitting, zoning, metering and connection processes – and improve finance options for residential and commercial rooftop solar systems." The SSTI team first provided an analysis of the solar market potential in the County. Included in their findings was that the County has a solar potential 10% greater than the National average. Once the market potential was evaluated, the SSTI team held several interviews with planning and building and safety department staff to see how the County permits and inspects private solar installations. With this information, the SSTI team provided the County with a Solar Roadmap. The Roadmap includes goals and a specific set of criteria to be met as a way to track and reach those goals. In response to the Roadmap recommendations, staff has developed a webpage that ties in with the energy reduction planning work that also took place during 2012. This webpage provides information on the process required to install private solar energy projects in the County, as well as, information on incentive programs and financial institutions with lending programs for home renewable energy projects. There is also a link to the SSTI Inyo County Roadmap. The website can be found at:
<http://inyoplanning.org/ERRE.htm>

CTPG – the CTPG is a forum for conducting joint transmission planning studies and for coordinating CTPG members' transmission planning activities. The CTPG members include both transmission owners and operators who are subject to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation and the Western Electricity Coordinating Council. The primary objective of the CTPG is to provide a foundation for a statewide transmission plan that identifies the transmission infrastructure needed to reliably meet California's 33% Renewable Portfolio Standard goal by the year 2020. CTPG has recently released the 2012 California Transmission Planning Group Statewide Transmission Plan Draft. The results of the CTPG planning efforts could affect transmission lines that run through Inyo County as well as the potential for renewable energy development in the county.

DWP Solar Ranch – the County is monitoring the DWP's Solar Ranch proposal in the Southern Owens Valley, which intends to development approximately 200 megawatts of photovoltaic. DWP issued a Notice of Preparation for the project in 2010, and the County provided responses regarding the scope of the EIR. Originally, the project had two locations and in 2012, there was a third location added south of Independence.

Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) – this joint Habitat Conservation/Natural Communities Conservation Plan is being developed for the Mojave and Colorado deserts to provide binding, long-term endangered species permit assurances and facilitate renewable energy project review and approvals. The

DRECP planning area includes portions of Inyo County: roughly in the Owens Valley to just north of Independence, the Panamint Valley, Death Valley, and other southeast portions of the County. The County has been participating in development of the DRECP and the County transmitted correspondence to the DRECP on several occasions in 2012 regarding alternatives development, concerns with the scope and content of the conservation plan being formulated, and potential planning grants.

Desert Protection Act – the County continues to monitor this bill, proposed by Senator Feinstein, which included numerous provisions regarding land use and renewable energy in California and other states. The County undertook substantial local outreach regarding the Act to provide input for the Senator in 2010. The Act was subsequently replaced by an update in 2011, but little progress has been made.

Quadstate Local Government Authority – the County joined this body in 2010, which was established in response to issues surrounding the desert tortoise. The authority is guided by a Joint Powers Agreement, and includes counties in Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and California. The organization is active regarding numerous issues relevant in the desert southwest, in addition to the tortoise. In 2011, a revised recovery plan for the tortoise was released and in 2012, the County participated in Recovery Implementation Team (RIT) meetings and provided input.

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) – an update to the County's RTP was completed in 2009. The RTP serves as the planning blueprint to guide transportation investments in the County involving local, state, and federal funding over the next 20 years. The Inyo County Local Transportation Commission (LTC) held hearings and workshops in 2008, and adopted the plan in 2009. In 2012, local agencies and the LTC continue to implement goals and policies set forth in the RTP.

Inyo County Collaborative Bikeways Plan – this plan sets forth goals and objectives for bicycle transportation the County of Inyo, City of Bishop, Bishop Paiute and was approved by each of these agencies and Caltrans in 2008. In 2012, local agencies, Caltrans, the Bishop Paiute Tribe, and the LTC continue to implement goals, policies, and projects set forth in the Bikeways Plan.

Update on the Implementation of Assembly Bill 628 for the Combined Use of County Roads

Inyo County residents lobbied the State on a project, which was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown October 7, 2011, which will give green sticker off-highway vehicle users the ability to travel up to 10 miles on some designated county roads to link together dirt trails and roads on federally managed lands and amenities such as food and gas. Assembly Bill 628 required the County to adopt procedures to implement the new legislation. The County adopted the Implementing Procedures in May 2012. A system-wide application was submitted to the County by the project proponents in December 2012. The County evaluated those applications and has sent required notification letters asking for determinations from California Highway Patrol and relevant land management

agencies. The County anticipates moving forward with CEQA review of the proposed combined-use system in 2013.

2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program – this project involved the development and selection of transportation projects that are then programmed in specific amounts and program years for the next five year funding cycle. This included Transportation Enhancement projects that were selected based on a call for projects. The development of this program required local and regional coordination. This program was approved by the State in 2012 and further implemented by Caltrans, County, and City of Bishop.

Land Tenure Project – this project focuses on opportunities and priorities for land exchanges in Mono and Inyo counties, and included public outreach and education about land exchange processes. The final Plan was presented to the Board in early 2012, and staff continues to coordinate with the implementing agencies regarding land exchange activities moving forward.

Inyo National Forest Motorized Travel Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement – the County requested coordination with the Forest Service regarding the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this Plan to work to improve access to public lands. The Final EIS and Preferred Alternative were issued in 2009, and the County continues to monitor its implementation.

Forest Service Planning Rule – the County participated in the development of the updated Forest Service Planning Rule, which involved County representatives attending numerous public meetings locally, regionally, and nationally in development of the rule. A draft rule was issued in February 2011, and the final rule was adopted in May 2012. The updated rule is being used locally on the forest plan update for the Inyo National Forest.

Inyo National Forest Plan Revision – The Inyo National Forest was selected as an early adopter of the Planning Rule and is one of eight forests to process a plan revision under the new rule. The County has been working with the Forest Service to develop an agreement to actively participate in the plan revision. The plan revision consists of three phases: assessment, plan revision, and monitoring. Currently the plan revision is in the assessment phase and the plan is scheduled to be adopted in 2016.

Motorized Vehicle Management in Western Mojave Planning Area (WEMO) - the County is participating in development of this plan, which proposes a plan amendment and alternatives covering the management of motorized vehicles on public lands in the Western Mojave area. The County submitted comments to the BLM for the scoping process. The County will continue to monitor WEMO activities as the process continues.

Death Valley Park Backcountry Plan – the County is participating in development of this plan, which is being proposed to guide decisions regarding future use and protection of the Park's wilderness and backcountry lands, including Congressionally-designated

wilderness lands, backcountry road corridors and campsites, backcountry cabins near roads, and non-wilderness backcountry lands. The County has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to participate in development of the Plan, and County staff has been attending meetings to develop the Plan. The Board of Supervisors provided comments regarding conceptual plan alternatives and the Environmental Assessment in the fall of 2012.

Saline Valley Plan – Death Valley National Park is embarking on a management plan for the warm springs in Saline Valley. An active user group utilizes the springs, which have been extensively altered from their natural state and now include concrete pools and other infrastructure. The Plan is intended to address the springs and nearby lands, which were not included in the Park's Management Plan due to their sensitivity. In 2012, the County entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Park, including memorializing the County's cooperating agency status, for the Plan and related Environmental Impact Statement. The County also submitted correspondence in response to the Park's scoping notice.

III. General Plan Elements

The General Plan details the County's guiding principles for a variety of planning topics and is the constitution for future development. California Government Code Section 65300 et seq. provides direction and specifications for the content of the General Plan. The following seven elements are required:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Noise
- Safety
- Housing

The elements may be combined or renamed, but basic requirements must be included. An agency may adopt any type of optional element, such as an Economic Element, at its discretion. Only the Housing Element must be certified by another agency (i.e., HCD), although the State Geologist provides some oversight of the Safety Element.

The Inyo County General Plan consists of the following Elements:

- Government
- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Circulation

- Conservation/Open Space
- Public Safety

Subtopics are included in the elements to meet California's requirements. The following sections address implementation for each of the County's General Plan Elements.

Government Element

The Government Element includes the following goals (1) promoting consistency of other agencies' actions with General Plan (Goal Gov-1), (2) encouraging collaborative planning and public participation (Goal Gov-2), (3) increasing private land ownership (Goal Gov-3), (4) guiding federal land actions and encouraging economic development (Goal Gov-4), (5) protecting and developing water resources (Goal Gov-5), (6) preserving and expanding agriculture (Goal Gov-6), (7) enhancing opportunities for recreation, including for off-road vehicles, hiking, and biking (Goal Gov-7), (8) encouraging improved management of wildlife and fisheries (Goal Gov-8), (9) promoting exploration, development, and reclamation of mineral resources (Goal Gov-9), (10) balancing energy development (Goal Gov-10), (11) enhancing transportation and preserving access (Goal Gov-11)

To achieve these goals, the County has continued dialogue with local, regional, state, and federal agencies on a variety of projects, as discussed elsewhere in this report, thereby continuing the previous coordination efforts with other agencies. The County constantly strives to ensure collaboration between national, California, and regional agencies as required by federal, state, and local regulations. The County works to make such agencies aware of County programs and policies and bring their actions into conformance with the General Plan. In particular, the County is working with the U.S. Forest Service to enter into an agreement which outlines how the County and the Forest Service will coordinate on the Forest Plan Revision.

The County also involves citizens, Native American tribes, and public interest groups in the planning process whenever feasible. Staff works to ensure that the public is made aware of all planning projects through mailings and notices in the newspaper to allow for their participation. Routine feedback and public input is requested, and the County's website is maintained to provide for current up-to-date information regarding planning issues.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element guides County land use policy and insures that appropriate development takes place, with adequate provision of public services and utilities. Land use designations are specified, defined, and mapped in the Land Use Diagrams. The land use designations roughly correspond to the County's zoning districts. Public services and utilities are also addressed in the Land Use Element. Development in and around existing towns is encouraged, which is where most building permits are issued.

Potential impacts from new development are assessed under CEQA. A Final EIR was produced for the proposed Crystal Geyser Cabin Bar Ranch Water Bottling Plant project, to be constructed about one-half mile north of the existing Crystal Geyser plant in Olancho. It is anticipated that the Final EIR will be certified in early 2013. The County continues to apply CEQA to projects with potential impacts. Additional conditions of approval and mitigation may be required if deemed necessary to provide for issues such as screening, parking, noise-reduction (etc.), or otherwise address issues per the General Plan's direction.

Economic Development Element

The Economic Development Element works to support long-term efforts to improve economic conditions for all County residents, and addresses tourism, natural resources, and retail sales. Towards these ends, the County has continued to promote access to public lands and limit any new restrictions being planned. Promotions regarding Inyo County in major population centers elsewhere in the State (including at the State fair) are carried out. Filming opportunities are exploited, and several dramatic locations were featured in film, television, and other venues in 2012.

Housing Element

The Housing Element, updated and certified by HCD in 2009, works to provide housing for all of the community, and addresses the needs of specified populations. Preliminary data indicate that in 2012 approximately 6 net new single family housing units were produced.

The County continues to work with service providers to provide for the needs of lower-income households, the disabled, and other special needs populations, per the direction provided in the Housing Element. The County is also working to update the Zoning Ordinance, which will incorporate new State zoning requirements regarding housing.

Circulation Element

The Circulation Element addresses a wide variety of topics, including roads, scenic highways, public transportation, bicycles and trails, railroads, aviation, canals, pipelines, and transmission cables. These planning programs prioritize improvement to achieve implementation measures for roadway repaving and reconstruction projects. Widening of Highway 395 as recommended by the Circulation Element continues, and other County roads are improved and maintained as funding permits.

As discussed previously, projects are reviewed to minimize impacts, provide for parking, reduce vehicle trips, and optimize transportation access. Continuing improvement in telecommunications infrastructure provides opportunities for telecommuting and economic development, and Digital 395 provides great opportunity for telecommunications enhancements locally. The County continues to work with Caltrans on 395 four-lane projects and provide comments and suggestions on the Olancho-Cartago

Four-Lane project. Viewshed issues along scenic highways are also addressed, as they may apply. The County continues to press the Forest Service and other federal agencies to address local concerns regarding appropriate motorized transport on federal lands and to otherwise maintain and improve access.

The County continues to work with and support ESTA to implement transit service throughout the County and beyond. The Short Range Transit Plan completed in 2009 and the Roles and Responsibilities Analysis started in 2010 implement the General Plan's direction to support and promote public transit and accessibility.

The County worked with the City of Bishop, Caltrans, and other local stakeholders to implement the Collaborative Bikeways Plan, which was adopted in 2008. This project implements the Circulation Element's bicycle goals, policies, and implementation measures. The County has been working on completing the environmental review for reconstruction of a main thoroughfare in Bishop to include class II and III bike lanes. Continued coordination with DWP, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management ensures appropriate trail maintenance and access to public lands. Inyo County residents have organized an active group known as the Advocates for Access to Public Lands (AAPL) that strives toward enhancing access to public lands. AAPL is working on a project, which was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown October 7, 2011, which will give green sticker off-highway vehicle users the ability to travel up to 10 miles on some designated county roads to access amenities such as food and gas. The County adopted implementing procedures in 2012 for the legislation and plans to complete the CEQA review of the combined-use system in 2013. The County continues its planning efforts to improve the Bishop airport, and is working with DWP regarding long-term ownership. The County is working on improving other airports in its jurisdiction by seeking grant funds and coordinating with Caltrans and the Federal Aviation Administration.

The County has been involved in planning activities for utility transmission and distribution systems passing through it, working to facilitate appropriate resource development. The County continues to work with telecommunication providers to provide for enhanced wireless communication systems.

Conservation/Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element works to provide for resource management, open space for recreation, and park development. Inyo County's Element includes sections on soils, agriculture, minerals and energy, water, biology, cultural (i.e., archaeology), visual, and recreation.

The County continues its programs to support agriculture and ranching. Mineral resource development is encouraged, and the County reviews projects to ensure compliance with SMARA and other regulations. As discussed above, the Planning Commission continues its work providing oversight for reclamation plans, and staff inspected approximately 100 mines in 2012. The County is working with State and federal agencies to encourage

mineral production, but has had difficulty limiting wilderness proposals and other actions that adversely impact mining viability.

The Environmental Health Department provides oversight and permitting for potable water and wastewater treatment systems in order to manage and improve water quality. Individual projects are reviewed to ensure that they do not adversely impact groundwater quality or quantity. Work on LORP and other enhancement projects improve surface water quality through biological filtering. Water transfers are reviewed to minimize environmental and economic effects. Potential impacts on biological, cultural, and visual resources are analyzed for projects and programs through environmental review processes. Architectural Design review in Lone Pine is carried out to ensure compatibility, and the County is participating in 395 Corridor planning to strengthen identity along the highway. The County continues to work to improve its parks and provide access to federal lands.

The County continued to participate in the Quadstate Local Government Authority: the County served on the Desert Tortoise Oversight Group, the Desert Managers Group, and the Desert Advisory Council as a way of providing a voice in regional planning initiatives and policy development.

Public Safety Element

The Public Safety Element works to reduce hazards regarding air quality, floods, avalanches, wildfires, geology and seismicity, and noise. The County continues to cooperate with DWP to reduce dust from Owens Lake, and evaluates air quality issues for major discretionary projects. Building permits and other development proposals are reviewed for flooding, fire, avalanche, and faulting hazards. The mitigation requirements developed and approved in the EIR prepared for the General Plan are enforced in areas subject to avalanche hazards. As discussed previously, the County has completed a fire management plan, and continues to address the Inyo Complex Fire and Oak Creek mudflow. FEMA Flood Maps for the County were updated in 2011 and are being used to evaluate whether projects are in potential flood zones. Noise issues are addressed through environmental review. Noise issues are being considered as part of the comprehensive zoning code update that was continued during 2012.

IV. General Plan and Zoning Code Update

The County is updating the General Plan to address issues that have arisen since the 2001 General Plan was adopted. Several items were addressed individually since then, but a holistic review and update is desired. Some follow-up modifications to the zoning ordinance specified in the General Plan have yet to be implemented, and a comprehensive update to the zoning is also being pursued.

During 2012, Staff held numerous workshops with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to receive direction and feedback on the updated general plan and zoning

code update. They specifically requested more in depth work be done on code enforcement and special event permits. Other work completed this year includes reorganizing and reformatting the General Plan and the Zoning Code, incorporating quantitative noise standards into the zoning code, separating the definitions into land use classifications and general definitions, varying development standards for residential uses to better reflect the character of the various communities, and updating and digitizing the zoning maps.

Work remaining to update the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance include addressing specific issues and topics, public outreach and environmental review.

V. Conclusion

The General Plan is the County's constitution and guiding vision. Due to the world's ever-changing nature, upkeep and maintenance of the General Plan is a continuous process. The County implements the General Plan's vision on a day-to-day basis in its many planning projects, and strives to include the public in the decision-making process. However, the County has encountered difficulty in making the voice of its citizens heard in some State and federal planning issues.

The County provided leadership and participated in many planning activities in 2012, as identified in this report. It continued its project review responsibilities to further the General Plan's goals, policies, programs, and implementation measures. Updates to remainder of the General Plan and the zoning ordinance are expected to move forward in 2013.

Appendix A

Government Code Section 65400

- (a) After the legislative body has adopted all or part of a general plan, the planning agency shall do both of the following:
 - (1) Investigate and make recommendations to the legislative body regarding reasonable and practical means for implementing the general plan or element of the general plan, so that it will serve as an effective guide for orderly growth and development, preservation and conservation of open-space land and natural resources, and the efficient expenditure of public funds relating to the subjects addressed in the general plan.
 - (2) Provide by April 1 of each year an annual report to the legislative body, the Office of Planning and Research, and the Department of Housing and Community Development that includes all of the following:
 - (A) The status of the plan and progress in its implementation.
 - (B) The progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs determined pursuant to Section 65584 and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 65583. The housing element portion of the annual report, as required by this paragraph, shall be prepared through the use of forms and definitions adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development pursuant to the rulemaking provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2). Prior to and after adoption of the forms, the housing element portion of the annual report shall include a section that describes the actions taken by the local government towards completion of the programs and status of the local government's compliance with the deadlines in its housing element. That report shall be considered at an annual public meeting before the legislative body where members of the public shall be allowed to provide oral testimony and written comments.
 - (C) The degree to which its approved general plan complies with the guidelines developed and adopted pursuant to Section 65040.2 and the date of the last revision to the general plan.
- (b) If a court finds, upon a motion to that effect, that a city, county, or city and county failed to submit, within 60 days of the deadline established in this section, the housing element portion of the report required pursuant to subparagraph (B) of

paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) that substantially complies with the requirements of this section, the court shall issue an order or judgment compelling compliance with this section within 60 days. If the city, county, or city and county fails to comply with the court's order within 60 days, the plaintiff or petitioner may move for sanctions, and the court may, upon that motion, grant appropriate sanctions. The court shall retain jurisdiction to ensure that its order or judgment is carried out. If the court determines that its order or judgment is not carried out within 60 days, the court may issue further orders as provided by law to ensure that the purposes and policies of this section are fulfilled. This subdivision applies to proceedings initiated on or after the first day of October following the adoption of forms and definitions by the Department of Housing and Community Development pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a), but no sooner than six months following that adoption.

Appendix B

Draft Housing and Community Development Department Annual Element Progress
Report Forms

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	Inyo County, California
Reporting Period	1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012

Table A
Annual Building Activity Report Summary - New Construction
Very Low-, Low-, and Mixed-Income Multifamily Projects

Housing Development Information										Housing with Financial Assistance and/or Deed Restrictions		Housing without Financial Assistance or Deed Restrictions
1	2	3	4				5	5a	6	7	8	
Project Identifier (may be APN No., project name or address)	Unit Category	Tenure R=Renter O=Owner	Affordability by Household Incomes				Total Units per Project	Est. # Infill Units*	Assistance Programs for Each Development	Deed Restricted Units	Note below the number of units determined to be affordable without financial or deed restrictions and attach an explanation how the jurisdiction determined the units were affordable. Refer to instructions.	
			Very Low- Income	Low- Income	Moderate- Income	Above Moderate- Income						
(9) Total			of Moderate and Above Moderate from Table A3				▲	▲	0	7	7	
(10) Total by income			Table A/A3				▲	▲				
(11) Total Extremely Low-Income Units*												

* Note: These fields are voluntary

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction Inyo County, California
Reporting Period 1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012

Table A2
Annual Building Activity Report Summary - Units Rehabilitated, Preserved and Acquired pursuant to GC Section 65583.1(c)(1)

Please note: Units may only be credited to the table below when a jurisdiction has included a program it its housing element to rehabilitate, preserve or acquire units to accommodate a portion of its RHNA which meet the specific criteria as outlined in GC Section 65583.1(c)(1)

Activity Type	Affordability by Household Incomes				(4) The Description should adequately document how each unit complies with subsection (c) (7) of Government Code Section 65583.1
	Extremely Low-Income*	Very Low-Income	Low-Income	TOTAL UNITS	
(1) Rehabilitation Activity				0	
(2) Preservation of Units At-Risk				0	
(3) Acquisition of Units				0	
(5) Total Units by Income	0	0	0	0	

* Note: This field is voluntary

Table A3
Annual building Activity Report Summary for Above Moderate-Income Units
(not including those units reported on Table A)

	1. Single Family	2. 2 - 4 Units	3. 5+ Units	4. Second Unit	5. Mobile Homes	6. Total	7. Number of infill units*
No. of Units Permitted for Moderate						0	
No. of Units Permitted for Above Moderate	3				4	7	

* Note: This field is voluntary

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction Inyo County, California
Reporting Period 1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012

Table B

Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress

Permitted Units Issued by Affordability

Enter Calendar Year starting with the first year of the RHNA allocation period. See Example.		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Total Units to Date (all years)	Total Remaining RHNA by Income Level
Income Level	RHNA Allocation by Income Level											
Very Low	Deed											116
	Restricted Non-deed restricted											
Low	Deed											70
	Restricted Non-deed restricted											
Moderate	Deed											83
	Restricted Non-deed restricted											
Above Moderate		18	16	6	16	10	7				73	115
Total RHNA by COG. Enter allocation number:		18	16	6	16	10	7				73	384
Total Units		18	16	6	16	10	7				73	384
Remaining Need for RHNA Period		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲		

Note: units serving extremely low-income households are included in the very low-income permitted units totals.

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	Inyo County, California
Reporting Period	1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012

Table C

Program Implementation Status

Program Description (By Housing Element Program Names)	Describe progress of all programs including local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing as identified in the housing element.	Timeframe in H.E.	Status of Program Implementation
Goal 2.1 - Provision of adequate sites	Release of DWP lands	Ongoing	The County continues to work with LADWP to release identified lands
Policy 2.2 - Emergency Shelters and Transitional Supportive Housing	Amendments to Zoning Ordinance	Ongoing	The County is working on amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.
Policy 3.3 - Second Units			In accordance with state laws and local zoning code the County continues to work toward encouraging second units.
Policy 4.3 - Home Financing Assistance	Apply for CDBG Grant	April, 2013	The County is working with Mammoth Lakes Housing to apply for CDBG Grants to assist first-time low-income homebuyers with down payments.
Policy 5.4 - Residential Care Facilities			The County will continue efforts to mitigate or remove constraints on housing for person with disabilities.

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	Inyo County, California
Reporting Period	1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012

General Comments:

1. affordability levels for newly permitted units cannot be determined - assumed to be above moderate; 2) lots are now for sale for Site No. 2 (i.e. Whitney Portal), in the sites inventory